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Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 106 Appropriations Committee March 3, 2022

Chairwomen Osten and Walker, Ranking Members Miner and France, and members of the Appropriations Committee, on behalf of the Republican Caucus, I would like to thank the committee for raising **SB 106 An Act Concerning Legislative Oversight and Approval for the Expenditure of Federal Transportation Infrastructure Funding**.

I support additional legislative oversight of allocations from the federal **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**. These historic investments over the next several years within our state total roughly \$6 billion and will be disbursed over the next few years. This level of funding represents an historic opportunity for our state – but with that opportunity comes a responsibility to ensure that these funds are expended effectively and through a transparent process.

These investments are a welcome enhancement to funding our infrastructure needs throughout our state. However, we must be mindful that the projects these investments will fund should not only be prioritized by need, but as elected officials we have an obligation to provide as much transparency during the allocation process as possible. Sadly, we can point to several high-profile cases in which taxpayers' funds were inappropriately spent. We have a duty to our constituents to do everything within our power to prevent such behavior and this bill is a step in the right direction.

Nevertheless, I have several concerns about the oversight of these funds being assigned to the Department of Revenue Services Commissioner and the proposed personnel structure consisting of highly paid but durational employees scattered among a few key agencies. We have not been provided with any additional information on the reporting structure of this arrangement, and, while I appreciate the attempt to provide durational employee oversight, it simply is not enough. Therefore, I will continue to advocate for a proven process that was eliminated several years ago and that was implemented by the non-partisan Transportation Strategy Board (TSB). The TSB if reestablished now, could help address the concerns I've raised and bring some much-needed sunlight to the process. This approach has been a consistent element of all the transportation plan proposals that Republicans have offered in recent years and we believe it is still critically important today.

I am also concerned about the turnaround process of approvals as outlined in this bill and noted by the CT Construction Industries Association. Their concerns should be debated, and I believe is another reason why the TSB would be a welcome potential solution.

Thank you for raising this bill and we hope you will consider the concerns we've expressed as you draft the final language.